

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.S.B. 1884
By: Ellis
Natural Resources
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Harris County Municipal Utility District No. 460 (the "District") will encompass an area of land inside of the corporate boundaries of the City of Houston, Texas. The land to be located within the District will be developed into single family residential and commercial development; therefore, water, sewer, and drainage services need to be secured. It is necessary to create the District under Chapters 49 (Provisions Applicable to All Districts) and 54 (Municipal Utility Districts), Water Code, in order to purchase, acquire, or construct facilities for such services to serve the future occupants of the land utilizing tax exempt bonds. S.B. 1884 provides regulations regarding the creation, administration, powers, duties, operation, and financing of the District.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Adds Chapter 8124 to Subtitle F, Title 6, Special District Local Laws Code, as follows:

SUBCHAPTER A. GENERAL PROVISIONS.

SECTION 8124.001. DEFINITIONS. Defines "board," "director," and "district."

SECTION 8124.002. NATURE OF DISTRICT. Provides that a district to be known as the Harris County Municipal Utility District No. 460 (the "District"), is created in Harris County. Provides that the district is essential to accomplish the purposes of Section 59, Art. XVI, Texas Constitution.

SECTION 8124.003. CONFIRMATION ELECTION REQUIRED. Provides that if the creation of the District is not confirmed at a confirmation election held under Section 8124.023 before September 1, 2007, the District is dissolved except that (a) any debts incurred shall be paid; (b) any assets that remain after the payment of debts shall be transferred to Harris County; and (c) the organization of the District shall be maintained until all debts are paid and remaining assets are transferred. Provides that in the event of the dissolution of the District as provided in this section, the Chapter expires on September 1, 2010.

SECTION 8124.004. INITIAL DISTRICT TERRITORY. Provides that the District is initially composed of the territory described by Section 2 of the Act. Sets forth legislative findings relating to the boundaries of the District.

SUBCHAPTER A-1. TEMPORARY PROVISIONS.

SECTION 8124.021. TEMPORARY DIRECTORS. Provides that on or after the effective date of this Act, a person who owns land in the District may submit a petition to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality requesting that the Commission appoint as temporary directors the five persons named in the petition. Provides that the Commission shall appoint as temporary directors the five persons named in the petition. Provides that the Commission shall appoint a person to fill a vacancy if a temporary director fails to qualify for office. Provides that as soon as practicable after all of the temporary directors have qualified, the temporary directors

shall meet and elect officers from among their membership. Provides that the temporary directors shall serve until the earlier of the date directors are elected under Section 8124.023 or the date this Chapter expires.

SECTION 8124.022. ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING OF TEMPORARY DIRECTORS.

Provides that the temporary directors shall meet at a location in the District agreeable to a majority of the directors as soon as practicable after all the temporary directors have qualified under Section 49.055, Water Code. Provides that if a location for the meeting cannot be agreed upon, the meeting shall be held at the Harris County Courthouse. Provides that the temporary directors shall elect officers from among the temporary directors and conduct any other District business at the meeting.

SECTION 8124.023. CONFIRMATION AND INITIAL DIRECTORS' ELECTION. Provides that the temporary board of directors shall call and hold an election to confirm the establishment of the District and to elect five initial directors in the manner provided by Section 49.102, Water Code.

SECTION 8124.024. INITIAL ELECTED DIRECTORS; TERMS. Provides that the temporary directors elected under Section 8124.023 shall draw lots to determine which two shall serve until the first regularly scheduled election of directors under Section 8124.052 and which three shall serve until the second regularly scheduled election of directors.

SECTION 8124.025. EXPIRATION OF SUBCHAPTER. Provides that this Subchapter expires September 1, 2010.

SUBCHAPTER B. BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

SECTION 8124.051. DIRECTORS; TERMS. Provides that the District is governed by a board of five directors. Provides that the directors serve staggered four-year terms.

SECTION 8124.052. ELECTION OF DIRECTORS. Provides that the appropriate number of directors shall be elected on the uniform election date in May of each even-numbered year.

SUBCHAPTER C. POWERS AND DUTIES.

SECTION 8124.101 GENERAL POWERS. Provides that the District has all of the rights, powers, privileges, authority, functions, and duties provided by the general law of this State, including Chapters 49 and 54, Water Code, applicable to municipal utility districts created under Section 59, Article XVI, Texas Constitution.

SECTION 8124.102. ROAD PROJECTS. Provides that the District may construct, acquire, improve, maintain, or operate macadamized, graveled, or paved roads or turnpikes, or improvements in aid of those roads or turnpikes, inside the District. A road project must meet all applicable standards and requirements of the municipality or county in whose jurisdiction the district is located. The district may not undertake a road project except by consent by ordinance or resolution by the municipality or county in which it is located.

SECTION 8124.103. COMPLIANCE WITH MUNICIPAL CONSENT ORDINANCES OR RESOLUTIONS. Provides that, subject to the limitations of Section 54.016, Water Code, the District shall comply with all valid and applicable requirements of an ordinance or resolution adopted by the City Council of the City of Houston, including an ordinance or resolution adopted before September 1, 2005, that consents to the creation of the District or to the inclusion of lands within the District.

SECTION 8124.104. LIMITATION ON USE OF EMINENT DOMAIN. The only case the district may exercise the power of eminent domain is to acquire an easement necessary for a pipeline that serves the district.

SUBCHAPTER D. GENERAL FINANCIAL PROVISIONS.

SECTION 8124.151. TAX TO REPAY BONDS. Provides that the District may impose a tax to pay the principal of or interest on bonds issued under Section 8124.201.

SUBCHAPTER E. BONDS.

SECTION 8124.201. AUTHORITY TO ISSUE BONDS AND OTHER OBLIGATIONS. Provides that the District may issue bonds or other obligations as provided by Chapters 49 and 54, Water Code, to finance the construction, maintenance or operation of projects under Sections 8124.101 and 8124.102. Provides that the District may not issue such bonds to finance projects authorized by Section 8124.102 unless the issuance is approved by a vote of a two-thirds majority of the voters of the District voting at an election called for that purpose. Provides that such bonds or other obligations issued or incurred to finance projects authorized by Section 8124.102 may not exceed one-fourth of the assessed value of the real property in the District. Provides that Sections 49.181 and 49.182, Water Code, do not apply to a project undertaken by the District under Section 8124.102 or to bonds issued by the District to finance the project.

SECTION 2. BOUNDARIES. Sets forth the boundaries of the District.

SECTION 3. FINDINGS RELATED TO PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS. Provides that proper and legal notice setting forth the general substance of this Act has been published as provided by law. Provides that the notice and a copy of this Act have been furnished to all persons, agencies, officials, or entities to which they are required to be furnished under Section 59, Article XVI, Texas Constitution, and Chapter 313, Government Code. Provides that the Governor has submitted the notice and Act to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. Provides that the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality has filed its recommendations relating to this Act with the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Speaker of the House of Representatives within the required time. Provides that all requirements of the Constitution and laws of this State and the rules and procedures of the legislature with respect to the notice, introduction, and passage of this Act have been fulfilled and accomplished.

SECTION 4. EFFECTIVE DATE. Provides that the effective date is September 1, 2005.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2005.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL TO SUBSTITUTE

The substitute modifies the original by removing the reference to Article III, Section 52 of the constitution from Section 8124.003. Section 8124.005 was removed. Section 8124.102 (a) allows the referenced road projects only inside the district. Subsections 8124.102 (b) and 8124.102 (c) were added. Section 8124.104 limiting the use of eminent domain was added.